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National Disability Employment Awareness Month 2015

Celebrating workers with disabilities

ISSUE 3: OCTOBER 23, 2015

Working Together for a Better Bottom Line

The Finance Department & Customized Employment Public Intern Project

Since 2008, the County Finance Department has supported the Customized Employment Public Intern Project (MCPIP) and has provided employment opportunities to eight individuals.

Montgomery County recognizes that job candidates with significant disabilities have much to offer but have difficulty competing for traditional jobs in government. In 2007, MCPIP was created based on the County's recognition that people with significant disabilities have difficulty accessing County government positions. Although the program name includes the term *intern*, MCPIP participants are actually hired into paid part-time term positions.

All County departments have the opportunity to participate in MCPIP.

They can create flexible work opportunities for individuals to fulfill department work requirements by partnering with a customized employment career specialist.

Part-time positions are developed based on the department's work needs and are matched with qualifying individuals to help them gain job experience and training. This helps the participants compete for County merit positions and obtain jobs in other organizations.

Get involved!

There are many ways to get involved with MCPIP. For details, contact:

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Fun fact:

Participants of the Montgomery County Customized Employment Public Intern Project are eligible to apply for vacancy announcements that are limited to County employees only.

Meet the MCPIP Participants



Jae Kim

**Office Assistant
Finance Department**

Jae Kim began her work in the Controller's office in December 2013. Jae has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from the University of Maryland, College Park. Her interest was to work and gain experience in order to obtain a long-term permanent position. Jae feels that her work is a positive learning experience that is helping her gain confidence and skills. Jae stated "I enjoy doing every project I am assigned."

Jae's duties involve document preparation for scanning plus verification of scanned documents. She writes work procedures and creates multiple filing systems used by the Fiscal Management Division to organize and efficiently maintain their bank statements.

Commenting on her employee learning experience and her accomplishments in the department, Jae expressed her appreciation for the opportunities she has had. Jae said, "Before my work experience, I was scared and did not know what to expect in the future. This experience is a way for me to prepare for the future. Now I can count on my experience and confidence to open other opportunities after I complete my position at the County." Outside her work hours, she pursues her many artistic talents—water color painting, drawing, calligraphy and typography.



Claudia Bocock

**Office Assistant
Finance Department**

Claudia Bocock was one of the first individuals hired through MCPIP to work in the Division of the Controller. In August 2014, she was hired as a contract worker. Currently, Claudia is part of the Administration Team and is assigned to work with Payroll, MCTime and Accounts Payable. Claudia was specially trained to use the office scanner for documents processed by Zylmage.

Claudia also prepares documents for storage, distributes the division mail, and ensure that all printers are available for departmental use.

Thinking about her work assignments, Claudia says, "I use my visual learning ability to complete my work projects and gain the confidence to work independently." What does she enjoy most about her work? She says, "Working in a real office where I complete office tasks. I always have a sense there is someone I can talk with to get help. I can work independently to do my assignments. This is my family."

In addition to working for the County, Claudia is a semi-professional actor of stage and film and is a regular usher at Imagination Stage. Her most recent acting job was in the Godspell musical as one of the main actors in the film "Imagine Working."



Meghan Jones

**Office Assistant
Finance Department**

Meghan Jones joined the Controller's Administration staff in March 2015. Her main duties are preparation and processing office documents for scanning in the Accounts Receivable section. She also distributes mail and has cross-trained to perform other duties.

Meghan leads a busy life. She recently completed a book scheduled for publication this year regarding advice for parents who have children with Down Syndrome. In the book, she shares her journey to be an independent person and provides insights to parents about her experiences.

She loves to record and write music and is learning how to improve her guitar skills. One of her special memories was the honor of being chosen by her Catholic Church to participate in the Mass celebrated by Pope Francis during his September visit to Washington, D.C. She happily recalls her role as the reader at the Pope's Mass and her two television interviews discussing her experience during the Pope's memorable visit.

In addition to working at the County, Meghan maintains two additional part-time positions at WorkSource Montgomery / TransCen, Inc. and Giant Food Store. Above all, Meagan looks forward to continuing her work in the Finance Department.



Joseph Beach

Director, Montgomery County Finance Department

In 2011, Joseph Beach joined the Finance Department. Under his leadership, the department is responsible for financial administration of the County government including accounting, debt management, revenue collection and risk management.

For the past three years, the Finance Department has provided flexible employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities based on the department's workforce needs. The creation of job-training opportunities starts with a department working with a customized employment career specialist to identify part-time positions matched to the individual's job interests, skills and competencies. Participants gain valuable on-the-job work experience to help them compete for County merit positions or opportunities in other organizations.

Reflecting on the accomplishments of the Finance Department MCPIP individuals who work in the department, Joseph said, "Individuals hired by the department are hard workers and are productive members of the team. Their work is valued by their co-workers, because they are responsible and dependable workers."

Meet the Providers of Opportunities for People with Disabilities

Stephanie Sawyer

**Administrative Specialist II
Finance Department**

Stephanie believes that staff hired through MCPIP and assigned to her team provide an invaluable service to the County and the department. They are the unseen force that makes sure the mail gets to the right individuals and keeps the printers operating. Their work performance for the various departmental areas is efficient and allows staff to focus on their projects. In the course of the work day, Stephanie works with Claudia, Jae and Meagan to review work assignments and answer questions for individual projects.

According to Stephanie, MCPIP offers individuals "valuable opportunities to learn, grow and gain on-the-job work experience that prepares them for employment opportunities after their term is completed."

Additionally, Stephanie believes that an important part of this program is how it helps prepare participants for future employment. To meet this goal, employees are encouraged to take County training classes and workshops. Stephanie works with individuals to help them update their resume and cover letters, and assist in job searches and applications. As she states, "The program is a win-win situation all around. The Office Assistants gain experience to prepare them for future positions, and the work they perform helps the department operate smoothly."

Lenny Moore

**Controller
Finance Department**

Over the past few years, the Controller Division in the Finance Department has served as a primary work setting for MCPIP participants. During that time, a total of eight MCPIP employees were hired and have worked in the Division of the

Controller. In most cases, the individuals are mid-term workers, have completed their term position, or were hired in another full-time position. Hired individuals are responsible for completing their assignments in a timely and accurate manner, and providing quality services to County residents.



According to Lenny, "MCPIP participants are dedicated workers who use their individual skills each day. I have seen each of them apply themselves to their assigned tasks and appreciate the level of detail they give to each project."

Complimenting them for their dedicated service, Lenny recalled examples of tasks each individual achieved: Jae's efficient manner of organizing office records; Meghan's careful preparation of documents for scanning; and Claudia's skills in photo-scanning and digitizing documents. "The work they each accomplish helps complete tasks that otherwise would not get done in a timely manner," said Lenny.

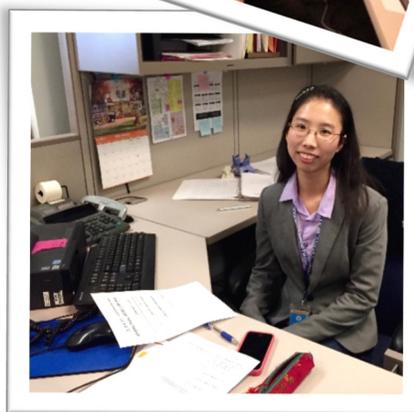
Special Thanks

Many organizations and County departments provide opportunities for persons with disabilities to help them develop their work skills and abilities. Representatives provide their time and experience to train, mentor and supervise MCPIP and Project SEARCH Montgomery participants to help them achieve their workforce goals.

A sincere message of appreciation to the individuals who work at:

- Montgomery County Government Departments:
 - Board of Elections
 - Community Use of Public Facilities
 - Correction and Rehabilitation
 - Environmental Protection
 - Fire and Rescue Service
 - General Services
 - Health and Human Services
 - Housing and Community Affairs
 - Human Resources
 - Management and Budget
 - Office of the County Attorney
 - Office of the State's Attorney
 - Permitting Services
 - Police
 - Public Libraries
 - Recreation
 - Sheriff's Office
 - Technology Services
 - Transportation
- Ivymount School
- Seeking Equality Empowerment and Community for People with Developmental Disabilities (SEEC)
- City of Gaithersburg
- City of Rockville
- Montgomery College
- Montgomery Parks

Photo Gallery



In Upcoming Issues...

This newsletter is a special weekly publication for the month of October 2015. In future issues, look for program participant spotlights, fun facts, photos and more as we continue to celebrate the 70th anniversary of National Disability Employment Awareness Month!

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Note: Alternative formats of this document are available upon request by contacting joe.heiney-gonzalez@montgomerycountymd.gov, 240-777-5070 or via Maryland Relay at 711.